

Governor Fletcher: “We set about Homeland Security and Major Edgington, again bringing the law enforcement perspective and a great deal of experience, understands very well and is doing an outstanding job. We have, like any organization, we have a limited amount of resources that we have to prioritize and distribute and we want to get the best return on investment. What is the return on investment that we’re looking for? We want to make sure that we’re prepared to respond in the best way possible. One of the things we found out in 9/11 was the fact that the police couldn’t talk to the fire department and the fire department couldn’t initially speak to other parts of government that were in the mayor’s office at that point and what we found out is that if there had been an interoperability to communicate if there had been some realization of the need for that in the past before that, and I don’t expect that there would have been to that degree, that lives could have been saved because there could have been coordination that would have resulted in saving lives, not only rescuing other lives but saving lives of our first responders there. As our priorities were interoperability, we wanted to make sure we could respond to hazardous materials and we also focused on regionalization with communities or regions that really had a good plan in mind and so these grants come in and they’re evaluated on their merits and these requests previously, the money had just been doled out kind of proportionately across the state and wasn’t really a focus of what would be accomplished with that. This doesn’t mean the money wasn’t used well by the communities, it just means there wasn’t a focus and mission and prioritization of the money to make sure that we get the best return on investments as I said which is provide the best protection for every dollar that we can.

One of the things you find when you look at homeland security, whether it’s securing us in times of natural disasters we’ve seen with Katrina or whether it’s a terrorist attack, law enforcement is an integral part of that. We saw that and I think we all remember as we just pasted one of the anniversaries for 9/11, the law enforcement officers, the police, the firefighters that were involved in that terrorist attack, and when we think of homeland security it’s no longer thinking of just our military. We’re thinking that our lines of defense involve our local EMS people, our police, our firefighters, our emergency management, our locally elected officials, and probably nothing more vividly portrays the need for planning, for making sure that we have a good decision tree, for knowing who’s going to make decisions, who’s going to be in charge. This recent event in the southern part of our United States with Katrina, part of what we want to do in Kentucky is to make sure we plan and that we are prepared as possible to meet any disaster whether it is natural or perpetrated by terrorists.

We did observe just a couple days ago, the anniversary of September 11th. Sunday was a day to recognize the tragic events of that day and to also recognize the contribution of Kentucky’s first responders. Our police officers, firefighters, and EMS personnel routinely put themselves in harm’s way to ensure that our communities and neighbors are protected.”

Major Alecia Edgington: “As a 20 year law enforcement veteran, having spent the last 15 years with the Kentucky State Police, I do understand the criticality of ensuring that our communities’ first responders can communicate effectively with one another. This is a

commitment that has become one of Governor Fletcher's chief priorities to ensure all of Kentucky's first responders have the necessary tools that they need effectively not just during an incident, but on a daily basis."